GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:250
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2007
UTILISATION OF UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND
Sethi Shri Arjun Charan

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of Universal Service Obligation (USO) fund utilised during each of the last three years ;

(b) the number of unconnected villages in rural areas those have been provided with landline/WLL telephone connections during the last three years in the country using funds available from the USO, State-wise; and

(c) the number of villages in the country yet to be provided with telephone connections alongwith the breakups of figures, State-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) The funds allocated to Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during the last three years from 2004-05 to 2006-07 have been fully utilized.

(b)&(c) USOF has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in remaining 66,822 unconnected villages in the country. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. As on 30th June, 2007, out of 66,822 unconnected eligible villages, 48,704 villages have been provided with VPT facility and the remaining 18,118 villages will be provided with VPTs progressively by November, 2007. A statement indicating the state-wise number of unconnected villages, number of villages provided with telephone connections during the last three years and the number of villages which are yet to be provided with telephone connections is given in the Annexure.